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A D V I C E

ADDRESSED TO THE

YOUNG CLERGY

OF THE

DIOCESE OF CARLISLE,

IN A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED

AT A GENERAL ORDINATION HOLDEN AT ROSE-CASTLE;

ON SUNDAY, JULY 29th, 1781.

By WILLIAM PALEY, M.A.

CHAPLAIN TO THE RIGHT REV.

E D M U N D,

LORD BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

L O N D O N:

Printed and sold by R. FAULDER, *New Bond-Street*; and
T. MERRIL, at *Cambridge*, 1783.

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DIOCESE OF CARLISLE

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is recommended to those who are preparing for holy orders, within the Diocese of Carlisle, to read *Collier's Sacred Interpreter*, and the four Gospels with *Clark's Paraphrase*; and to candidates for Priests orders, carefully to peruse *Taylor's Paraphrase on the Romans*.

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1 TIM. iv. 12.

Let no Man despise thy Youth.

THE author of this epistle, with many better qualities, possessed in a great degree what we at this day call a *knowledge of the world*. He knew, that although age and honours, authority of station, and splendor of appearance, usually command the veneration of mankind, unless counteracted by some degrading vice, or egregious impropriety of behaviour; yet, that where these advantages are wanting, where no distinction can be claimed from rank, importance from power, or dignity from years; in such circumstances, and under the inevitable depression of narrow fortunes, to procure and preserve respect requires both care and merit. The apostle also knew, and in the text taught his beloved

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convert, that to obtain the respect of those amongst whom he exercised his ministry, was an object deserving the ambition of a Christian teacher, not indeed for his own sake, but for theirs, there being little reason to hope that any would profit by his instruction who despised his person.

If *St. Paul* thought an admonition of this sort worthy of a place in his epistle to *Timothy*, it cannot surely be deemed either beside or beneath the solemnity of this occasion, to deliver a few practicable rules of life and behaviour, which may recommend you to the esteem of the people, to whose service and salvation you are now about to dedicate your lives and labours.

In the first place, the stations which you are likely, for some time at least, to occupy in the church, although not capable of all the means of rendering service and challenging respect, which fall within the power of your superiors, are free from many prejudices that attend upon higher preferments. Interfering interests and disputed rights; or where there

is no place for dispute, the very claim and reception of legal dues, so long as what is received by the minister is taken from the parishioner, form oftentimes an almost insuperable obstruction to the best endeavours that can be used to conciliate the good will of a neighbourhood. These difficulties perplex not *you*. In whatever contests with his parishioners the *principal* may be engaged, the *curate* has neither dispute nor demand to stand between him and the affections of his congregation,

Another, and a still more favourable circumstance in your situation is this; being upon a level with the greatest part of your parishioners, you gain an access to their conversation and confidence, which is rarely granted to the superior clergy, without extraordinary address and the most insinuating advances on their parts. And this is a valuable privilege; for it enables you to inform yourselves of the moral and religious state of your flock, of their wants and weaknesses, their habits and opinions, of the vices which prevail, and the principles from which they proceed :

proceed : in a word, it enables you to study the distemper before you apply the remedy ; and not only so, but to apply the remedy in the most commodious form, and with the best effect ; by private persuasion and reproof, by gentle and unsuspected conveyances in the intimacy of friendship and opportunities of conversation. To this must be added the many occasions, which the living in habits of society with your parishioners affords you of reconciling dissensions, healing animosities, administering advice to the young and inexperienced, and consolation to age and misery. I put you in mind of this advantage, because the right use of it constitutes one of the most respectable employments not only of our order, but of human nature ; and leaves you, believe me, little to envy in the condition of your superiors, or to regret in your own. It is true, that this description supposes you to reside so constantly, and to continue so long in the same parish, as to have formed some acquaintance with the persons and characters of your parishioners ; and what scheme of doing good in your profession, or even of doing your duty, does not suppose this ?

But

But whilst I recommend a just concern for our reputation, and a proper desire of public esteem, I would by no means flatter that passion for praise and popularity, which seizes oftentimes the minds of young clergymen, especially when their first appearance in their profession has been received with more than common approbation. Unfortunate success! if it incite them to seek fame by affectation and hypocrisy, or lead, as vanity sometimes does, to enthusiasm and extravagance. This is not the taste or character I am holding out to your imitation. The popular preacher courts fame for its own sake, or for what he can make of it; the sincerely pious minister of Christ modestly invites esteem, only or principally, that it may lend efficacy to his instruction, and weight to his reproofs; the one seeks to be known and proclaimed abroad, the other is content with the silent respect of his neighbourhood, sensible that *that* is the theatre upon which alone his good name can assist him in the discharge of his duty.

It may be necessary likewise to caution you against some aukward endeavours to lift

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themselves into importance, which young clergymen not unfrequently fall upon; such as a conceited way of speaking, new airs and gestures, affected manners, a mimicry of the fashions, language, and diversions, or even of the follies and vices of higher life; a hunting after the acquaintance of the great, a cold and distant behaviour towards their former equals, and a contemptuous neglect of their society. Nothing was ever gained by these arts, if they deserve the name of arts, but derision and dislike.—Possibly they may not offend against any rule of moral probity; but if they disgust those with whom you are to live, and upon whom the good you do must be done, they defeat not only their own end, but, in a great measure, the very design and use of your vocation.

Having premised these few observations, I proceed to describe the qualities which principally conduce to the end we have at present in view, the possession of a fair and respected character.

It may be necessary likewise to caution you against some awkward endeavours to lift them-

And the first virtue (for so I will call it) which appears to me of importance for this purpose, is *frugality*. If there be a situation in the world in which profusion is without excuse, it is in that of a young clergyman who has little beside his profession to depend upon for his support. It is folly—it is ruin—Folly, for whether it aim at luxury or show, it must fall miserably short of its design. In these competitions we are outdone by every rival. The provision which clergymen meet with upon their entrance into the church is adequate in most cases to the wants and deficiencies of their situation, but to nothing more.—To pretend to more, is to set up our poverty not only as the subject of constant observation, but as a laughing stock to every observer. Profusion is ruin: for it ends, and soon too, in debt, in injustice, and insolvency. You well know how meanly, in the country more especially, every man is thought of who cannot pay his credit; in what terms he is spoken of—in what light he is viewed, what a deduction this is from his good qualities, what an aggravation of his bad ones—

what insults he is exposed to from his creditors, what contempt from all. Nor is this judgment far amiss. Let him not speak of honesty, who is daily practising deceit; for every man who is not paid is deceived. Let him not talk of liberality, who puts it out of his power to perform one act of it.—Let him not boast of spirit, of honour, of independence, who fears the face of his creditors, and who meets a creditor in every street. There is no meanness in frugality: the meanness is in those shifts and expedients, to which extravagance is sure to bring men. Profusion is a very equivocal proof of generosity. The proper distinction is not between him who spends and him who saves; for they may be equally selfish; but between him who spends upon himself, and him who spends upon others. When I extol frugality, it is not to praise that minute parsimony which serves for little but to vex ourselves and those about us; but to persuade you to *economy upon a plan*, and that plan deliberately adjusted to your circumstances and expectations. Set out with it, and it is easy; to retrieve,

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out of a small income, is only not impossible. Frugality in this sense, we preach not only as an article of prudence, but as a lesson of virtue. Of this frugality it has been said, that it is the parent of liberty, of independence, of generosity.

A second essential part of a clergyman's character, is *sobriety*. In the scale of human vices there may be some more criminal than drunkenness, but none so humiliating. A clergyman cannot, without infinite confusion, produce himself in the pulpit before those who have been witnesses to his intemperance. The folly and extravagance, the rage and ribaldry, the boasts and quarrels, the idiotism and brutality of that condition, will rise up in their imaginations in full colours. To discourse of temperance, to touch in the remotest degree on the subject, is but to revive his own shame. For you will soon have occasion to observe, that those who are the slowest in taking any part of a sermon to themselves, are surprizingly acute in applying it to the preacher.

Another

Another vice, which there is the same together with many additional reasons for guarding you against, is *dissoluteness*. In my judgment, the crying sin and calamity of this country at present, is licentiousness in the intercourse of the sexes. It is a vice which hardly admits of argument or dissuasion. It can only be encountered by the censures of the good, and the discouragement it receives from the most respected orders of the community. What then shall we say, when they who ought to cure the malady, propagate the contagion. Upon this subject bear away one observation, that when you suffer yourselves to be engaged in any unchaste connexion, you not only corrupt an individual by your solicitations, but debauch a whole neighbourhood by the profligacy of your example.

The habit I will next recommend as the foundation of almost all other good ones, is retirement. Were I required to comprize my advice to young clergymen in one sentence it should be in this, learn to live alone. Half
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of your faults originate from the want of this faculty. It is impatience of solitude which carries you continually from your parishes, your home, and your duty; makes you foremost in every party of pleasure and place of diversion; dissipates your thoughts, distracts your studies, leads you into expence, keeps you in distress, puts you out of humour with your profession, causes you to place yourselves at the head of some low company, or to fasten yourselves as despicable retainers to the houses and society of the rich. Whatever may be the case with those, whose fortunes and opportunities can command a constant succession of company, in situations like ours to be able to pass our time with satisfaction alone, and at home, is not only a preservative of character, but the very secret of happiness. Do what we will, we must be much and often by ourselves: if this be irksome, the main portions of life will be unhappy. Besides which, we are not the less qualified for society, because we are able to live without it. Our company will be the more welcome for being never obtruded. It is with this, as with many pleasures, he
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meets it the oftenest, and enjoys it the best, who can most easily dispense with the want of it.

But what, you say, shall I do alone? reading is my proper occupation and my pleasure, but books are out of my reach, and beyond my purchase. They who make this complaint are such as seek nothing from books but amusement, and find amusement in none but works of narrative or imagination. This taste, I allow, cannot be supplied by any moderate expence or ordinary opportunities: but apply yourselves to study, take in hand any branch of useful science, especially of those parts of it which are subsidiary to the knowledge of religion, and a few books will suffice; for instance, a commentary upon the New Testament read so as to be remembered, will employ a great deal of leisure, very profitably. There is likewise another resource, which you have forgot, I mean the composition of sermons. I am far from refusing you the benefit of other men's labours; I only require that they be called in not to flatter laziness, but to assist industry.

You

One sort of men, observing nothing in the lives of christians, corresponding to the magnificence, if I may so say, of these expressions, have been tempted to conclude, that the expressions themselves had no foundation in truth and nature, or in any thing but the enthusiasm of their authors.—Others again understand these phrases to signify nothing more, than that gradual amendment of life and conversation, which reason and religion sometimes produce in particular christians—of which interpretation it is truly said, that it degrades too much the proper force of language, to apply expressions of such energy and import to an event, so ordinary in its own nature, and which is common to christianity with every other moral institution. Lastly, a third sort, in order to satisfy these expressions to their full extent, have imagined to themselves certain perceptible impulses of the Holy Ghost, by which, in an instant, and in a manner, no doubt sufficiently extraordinary, they are “*regenerate and born of the spirit*”—they become “*new creatures*”—they are made the “*sons of God,*” who were before the “*children of wrath,*”—they are “*freed from sin,*”

sin," and "from death"—they are chosen, that is, and sealed, without a possibility of fall, unto final salvation.—Whilst the patrons of a more sober exposition have been often challenged, and sometimes confounded with the question—If such expressions of scripture do not mean *this*, what do they mean? To which we answer—nothing—nothing, that is, to us—nothing to be found, or sought for, in the present circumstances of christianity.

More examples might be produced, in which the unwary use of scripture language has been the occasion of difficulties and mistakes—but I forbear—the present are sufficient to show, that it behoves every one, who undertakes to explain the scriptures, before he determine to whom, or what an expression is now a days to be applied, to consider diligently whether they admit of any such application at all; or whether it is not rather to be restrained to the precise circumstances and occasion for which it was originally composed.

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I make no apology for addressing this subject to this audience ; because whatever relates to the interpretation of scripture, relates, as I conceive, to us ; for, if, by any light we may cast upon these ancient books, we can enable and invite the people to read the Bible for themselves, we discharge in my judgment the first duty of our function — ever bearing in mind that we are the ministers not of our own fame or fancies, but of the sincere Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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